

REMARKS:

The above amendments and following remarks are responsive to the points raised in the December 8, 2005 final Office Action. Upon entry of the above amendments, Claims 1, 7-10, 12, and 25 will have been amended, Claims 5 and 6 will have been canceled, and Claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12, and 25 will be pending. No new matter has been introduced. No issues have been raised that require further consideration or search. Entry and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a)

Claims 5, 6, 9, 10, and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over US patent 6,829,110 to Watanabe. Claims 1, 2, 7, and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe, as applied to Claims 5, 6, 9, 10, and 12, and further in view of US Patent 6,657,680 to Takizawa. Applicant traverses these rejections.

As set forth below, the Examiner has indicated the allowability of the subject matter introduced in dependent Claims 25 if rewritten in independent form and including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. In the interest of expediting the prosecution of the present application, Applicant has amended dependent Claim 25 to include all of the limitations introduced in case Claim 5 including any intervening claims. On this basis, newly amended Claim 25 is distinguished over Watanabe and/or Takizawa, either alone or in combination. Rejected dependent Claims 1, 2, and 7-10 3 and 4, which have been amended to depend from newly amended Claim 25, are likewise distinguished over Watanabe and/or Takizawa, either alone or in combination, for at least the same reasons as amended Claim 25.

Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 25 has been objected to by the Examiner as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As discussed above, Claim 25 has been amended to include all of the limitations of base Claim 5 including any intervening claim, whereas dependent Claims 1, 2, and 7-10 have been amended to depend from amended Claim 25. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1, 2, 7-10, and 25 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12 and 25 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required for filing this Amendment and Request for Reconsideration to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1232-5316.

Respectfully submitted,

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